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LAYOVER? DON'T PASS OVER L.A.

WEST HOLLYWOOD HAS SO MUCH TO OFFER THAT YOU WON'T NEED WHEELS PAGE 15

The newest in must-see TV

2015 offers promising small-screen fare, from Better Call Saul to Marvel's Daredevil PAGE 14

Luongo says he might still be a Canuck ...

If not for his Heritage Classic benching PAGE 21

Smile for the Selfie Room

Richmond. New photo studio invites people to snap pics in a professional studio

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

Pucker those lips and get your hashtags ready for a new B.C. business that's taking selfies to the next level.

Vancouver resident Carbo Ngai has opened what she believes to be the Lower Mainland's first selfie photography studio, where snap-happy customers can pay to take self-portraits in a professionally lit room with a variety of backdrops and props.

The Selfie Room, which opened in Richmond about a week ago, was inspired by Ngai's travels to Asia, where selfie studios have been around for more than a year.

"It's crazy popular in Asia right now," Ngai said, estimating there are about 30 studios in Hong Kong and others in Beijing, Singapore and Thailand.

Those willing to shell out $15 to $23 per person, depending on group size, will no longer have to hold their smartphones at awkward angles to capture Instagram-worthy photos.

Rather, the studio has a professional camera set up so people simply press a remote button mid-pose. It's similar to a photo booth but, instead of prints, customers get a USB stick with all of their high-quality photos at the end of the 50-minute sessions.

Ngai recognizes her business might get some flak from critics who are sick of the ubiquitous selfie — often taken in mundane or inappropriate situations, prompting an entire joke market for #selfie-fails — but she defends it as a fun way to create and share memories with friends.

"At first when we brought out this idea, we did have some people that say, 'OMG, are you serious? That's so lame.' But the moment we get someone to try it, they fall in love with it."

About 30 groups have been through the studio so far, ranging from teenage girls who took more than 2,000 photos to shy families that posed for only a dozen.

It's cheaper and more comfortable than professional shoots with a photographer, Ngai says, so she hopes it will appeal to thrifty people who want to spend less on wedding pictures, family portraits and graduation photos.

But the primary target is groups who want a fun experience with friends — similar to karaoke.

The studio is in the same location as Ngai's other business, an escape-room facility called Trapped where groups are locked in a room and try to get out. There are an estimated 12 such facilities across Metro Vancouver.

A photo from the Selfie Room, the self-proclaimed first selfie photo studio in the Lower Mainland. FACEBOOK

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NEWS

No explosion this time

B.C. students' space project delayed again

A science project dreamed up by a group of students in central British Columbia is on hold again after exploding on a rocket launching pad almost two months ago.

An unmanned SpaceX rocket was supposed to blast off before sunrise Tuesday, but the countdown was halted with just one minute remaining.

Officials said the problem was with motors needed for second-stage rocket thrust steering. If controllers had not aborted the launch, computers would have done so closer to flight time, NASA launch commentator George Diller said.

The soonest SpaceX can try again to send the rocket to the International Space Station is Friday.

Four boys from McGowan Park Elementary School in Kamloops had won a contest to have their experiment join 17 other student projects from across North America on a trip to the orbiting station.

But the amateur experiments — along with a payload of supplies destined for the space station — were destroyed on Oct. 28 when a NASA-contracted rocket exploded in a spectacular fireball in eastern Virginia.

If and when the Kamloops students' experiment gets to the station, it will examine how the zero-gravity environment of space affects the growth of crystals.

The students prepared silicon tubes containing solutions that, when mixed, cause crystals to form.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nobody Likes Me by Vancouver street artist iHeart. FACEBOOK

Local street-art piece ranked No. 2 in 2014

Second only to Banksy. iHeart's work in Stanley Park captured 'crazy' attention worldwide

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

Everybody liked a Vancouver street artist's take on our like-obsessed culture last year.

British website Street Art News ranked iHeart's graffiti mural entitled Nobody Likes Me as the No. 2 most popular piece in the world for 2014, second only to a piece by the world-famous Banksy.

The mural featured a distressed boy with a smartphone in his hand crying over an Instagram notification with no likes, no comments and no friend requests.

The piece appeared in Stanley Park early last year and captured global attention when a photo of it was posted to Banksy's Facebook page in March. The post garnered more than 121,000 likes and thousands of comments.

"The attention this piece has gotten has been crazy, to say the least," iHeart wrote in an email to Metro, adding it was an honour to be featured on the Top 25 list.

The mural was inspired by the digital world we live in, where everything we think or do is posted online, the artist explained.

"Street art is in a strange place now. It can exist forever online, so the ephemeral nature of it is lost," iHeart wrote.

"Nobody Likes Me was just poking fun at how obsessive and ridiculous the social-media era can be. But it's entered this spectrum of hyper-irony, with it being re-posted over and over with comments like, 'This generation is so sad.' The original meaning has been skewed a tad."

iHeart is planning their first solo show for spring 2015, but the date and location are still top secret.

The ranking adds to an impressive year for street art in Vancouver. Last summer, the famous Brazilian twins known as OSGEMEOS put the city on the street-art map for their massive mural on the industrial silos at Granville Island.

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Gas pipelines can't carry oil, bitumen: B.C.

Natural gas is burned off in the background as Premier Christy Clark visits the Encana compressor site in Dawson Creek on April 18, 2013.
JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rules. Regulation prohibits the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission from allowing any conversion of a natural gas pipeline

A proposed network of pipelines from natural gas fields in British Columbia's northeast to liquefied natural gas export plants in the northwest will not be permitted to pump oil and diluted bitumen, the provincial government says.

The Natural Gas Development Ministry said a new regulation prohibits the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission from allowing any conversion of a natural gas pipeline supplying an LNG facility.

But the Opposition New Democrats said the regulation is not tough enough.

Stikine New Democrat Doug Donaldson said Tuesday that he wants legislation instead to guarantee oil and bitumen won't end up in the proposed gas pipelines. He said that in the spring, he intends to re-introduce his private member's bill from last year in an effort to ban oil and bitumen from the pipelines.

Donaldson said many of the proposed natural pipelines will pass through his riding, and area residents and some First Nations are concerned about the potential of an environmental disaster connected to a leak or rupture of a pipeline pumping oil or bitumen.

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Busted

Charges laid after cross-border drug bust: RCMP

Drug charges have been laid in British Columbia against two men accused of trying to import 29 kilograms of cocaine from the United States.

RCMP Sgt. Laurie White says the United States Border Patrol notified Surrey Mounties on Nov. 8 about two men wearing camouflage clothing and helmets who crossed the border illegally by foot.

She says members of the Surrey and Langley detachments responded, arresting the two men and seizing the drugs.

White says 39-year-old Victor Peal of Bellingham, Wash., and 24-year-old Kyle Provo of Surrey are charged with importation and possession for the purpose of trafficking.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Court. Pair facing 17 charges for alleged Abbotsford crime spree

A Chilliwack pair is facing 17 criminal charges after they allegedly stole two SUVs, ran a police roadblock and took out a fire hydrant before crashing into a yard in Abbotsford early Monday.

Const. Ian MacDonald said the roadblock was set up on Short Road to block downed trees and power lines following a storm.

Around 2 a.m., a black Toyota 4Runner ran the roadblock and sped past the officer before crashing in the 33,800 block of Vye Road a few minutes later.

"It was actually into someone's yard and that same vehicle has now taken out a fire hydrant, crashed into a pole, and all of this is strewn across someone's yard," MacDonald told Metro.

When officers arrived, MacDonald said the occupants had fled.

Police confirmed the vehicle was stolen from Chilliwack and, with the help of police dogs, started searching for the driver and passenger.

Soon after, he said a black Ford Explorer drove eastbound on Vye Road past officers at the scene of the crash.

"That in and of itself wouldn't be peculiar except for the fact that ... both the driver and the passenger were slouching in their chairs," he said.

Police eventually tracked down the vehicle near Highway 1 and No. 3 road, police said.

MacDonald said officers confirmed the vehicle was stolen from a home near the scene of the crash in the 33,900 block of Vye Road, where residents had also reported a break-in.

Officers stopped a vehicle with a spike belt and arrested the male driver and female passenger.

Brian Robert Stephan, 29, and Stephanie Liane Glaister, 27, face charges of break-and-enter, theft of vehicles, and multiple counts of possession of stolen property.

Stephan is also facing charges of breach of probation, failure to remain at the scene of a collision, dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, prohibited driving and driving while suspended.

The pair is well known to police, said MacDonald.

With treacherous road conditions due to snowfall and freezing rain Monday, MacDonald said the incident posed a safety risk for both the suspects and police officers but fortunately ended without any injuries.

THANDI FLETCHER/METRO

Just short of record

End of snow days in sight for some

Students in parts of British Columbia will have to come to terms with reality on Wednesday, when it's time to get back to class after two snow days extended their winter vacation.

Schools in Vernon and the North Okanagan-Shuswap region will reopen after crews were able to clear snow from parking lots and walkways.

But there's no word yet on whether schools in Kelowna and Kamloops will also open.

Heavy snow forced the closure of schools in the province's central and north Okanagan, Vernon and parts of the Fraser-Cascade districts.

Two storms dumped as much as 33.5 centimetres of snow in Kelowna, although some areas in the Thompson-Okanagan recorded even more snow.

Environment Canada said that was shy of a two-day record snowfall of 38.9 centimetres set in December 1949. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Plymouth Grand Voyageur

Wheelchair accessible van stolen in Langley

Langley RCMP are asking for the public's help finding a van stolen from the Carvolth bus exchange on Friday.

The van, a white 1998 Plymouth Grand Voyageur, has had more than $5,000 in modifications to it to accommodate a family member who uses a wheelchair.

Anyone with information about the van's whereabouts is asked to contact police.

The van was stolen from the lot sometime between 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

The license plate is 125 TEV. METRO

Retired teacher

Trial date to be set in child-porn case

A retired teacher facing a child-pornography charge will return to B.C. Supreme Court in two weeks to set a trial date.

Jerry Waselenkoff is facing one count of possession of child pornography, and a date for his trial is expected to be set on Jan. 19.

The Kamloops resident was charged in 2013 after an investigation that lasted nearly a year.

The Crown is expected to rely on testimony from workers who said they found a stash of DVDs during electrical repairs in a condo above the one in which Waselenkoff was living in 2012. Last year, the former elementary school teacher tried to amend a bail condition that prevented him from travelling to Thailand. A provincial court judge denied his request. THE CANADIAN PRESS

B.C. bad at New Year's resolutions, but better than Alberta, poll says

People in B.C. don't always make their resolutions stick, but they are still more likely to at least try to improve themselves than Albertans, reveals a new Insights West poll. COLOURBOX.COM

75% of people in B.C. have made resolutions. B.C. has Alberta beat on 'the resolution thing,' pollster says

THANDI FLETCHER
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British Columbians are all talk and no walk when it comes to New Year's resolutions, according to the latest Insights West poll.

But while people in B.C. don't always make their resolutions stick, they are still more likely to at least try to improve themselves than Albertans, the poll revealed.

"It's interesting," said Insights West pollster Mario Canseco. "(Albertans) really aren't as keen on the resolution thing as we are."

The survey revealed that 75 per cent of people in B.C. admitted to making New Year's resolutions in the past, compared to only 58 per cent of Albertans.

The trend continues this year with 42 per cent of people in B.C. saying they plan on making New Year's resolutions, compared to only 31 per cent of Albertans. The divide lies in how people in each province perceive the last month of the year, said Canseco.

Previous polls have pointed to Albertans being more focused on the spiritual aspect of the holiday season compared to people in B.C., who tend to be more preoccupied with fitness, he said. When it comes to keeping their pledges, however, it seems people in both provinces have spotty track records, the poll revealed.

Forty-nine per cent of people in both B.C. and Alberta said they have done "very well" or "well" in sticking with their goals, while a similar proportion — 47 per cent in B.C. and 46 per cent in Alberta — said they had done "poorly" or "very poorly." About half of people in B.C. and 45 per cent of people in Alberta said they are "comfortable with who they are" and don't plan on making any resolutions, the poll showed.

Improving physical well-being ranked No. 1 for the top resolution in both provinces, with 71 per cent of people in B.C. and 66 per cent of Albertans saying they intend to lose weight, eat healthy, quit smoking or play sports.

The poll of 825 British Columbians and 603 Albertans was conducted between Dec. 28 and Dec. 30 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 per cent for B.C. and plus or minus 3.9 per cent for Alberta, 19 times out of 20.

No resolutions for some

The poll suggests that about 50 per cent of people in B.C. and 45 per cent of people in Alberta said they are "comfortable with who they are" and don't plan on making any resolutions.

Ex-Mountie who killed wife gets escorted leave

A former Mountie convicted of first-degree murder has been granted escorted, overnight leave privileges even after his parole was repeatedly suspended or revoked because he was "being deceitful."

Patrick Kelly was convicted in 1983 for throwing his wife off the 17th-floor balcony of their Toronto apartment.

Kelly, 64, was originally granted day parole in 2003. Since then, his parole has been revoked and granted several times for failing to disclose financial dealings or relationships with women.

A November board decision that was just released to the media said Kelly is manipulative and greedy, has used the Internet to develop female friendships even though he's been banned from using computers and continues to push the boundaries with his supervisors.

Despite that, the board concluded he does not present an undue risk and can remain on day parole, but he will have to be escorted for overnight leaves to attend medical treatments in B.C.'s Lower Mainland.

The ruling said parole board members discussed with Kelly his history of deceit and manipulation.

"You admitted to having been self-centred, deceptive and manipulative in the past," the decision said. "You insisted that during your last release you were diligent in being open until your health issues, followed by heavy drinking, resulted in your relapse to deceptive behaviour."

The documents did not detail Kelly's health problems.

The former undercover officer was granted full parole in 2010, but the board reversed his release after he failed to report two relationships with women.

Since his latest day-parole release in June 2014, Kelly admitted to accessing Internet dating sites and making contact with several women without revealing his criminal past, the board noted.

"You expect any future relationships may be intimate in different ways due to your health issues, and you do not want to return to prison because your health issues have resulted in your realization of your fallibility."

The document said Kelly lives somewhere in B.C. outside Metro Vancouver and operated an antique store, but his exact location has not been disclosed.

His request to move to the Lower Mainland and pursue his antique business wasn't supported by his case-management team, the decision stated.

Kelly is to abide by a number of conditions while on day parole, including not consuming alcohol, reporting all relationships with females, providing financial information to a supervisor and not using a computer or cellphone that has access to the Internet.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Maintaining innocence

Kelly has always denied killing his wife, claiming her fall from their luxury condo on Toronto's waterfront was an accident.

- The Crown told his trial that Kelly was attempting to cash in on his wife's large life insurance policy. Court heard that he and another woman went on a Hawaiian vacation shortly after his wife's funeral.

Criminal Justice Branch implements reforms to vulnerable witness policies

New policy went into effect last month.
Changes based on recommendations from Missing Women Commission of Inquiry

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Vulnerable victims of crime as well as witnesses will be afforded more support now that the Criminal Justice Branch has implemented new policies based on recommendations from the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry.

The branch announced Tuesday that new polices on supporting adult vulnerable victims and witnesses — such as sex trade workers, Aboriginals, or the mentally ill — are now in effect.

The policies require Crown counsel to identify vulnerable victims and witnesses early on in prosecution, maintain regular communication with them, protect their identities and link them to any possible supports.

The regulations also encourage the Crown to make quicker charge assessment decisions and push for earlier trial dates when a vulnerable witness is involved.

The changes stem from Commissioner Wally Oppal's findings during the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry into the Robert Pickton police investigations.

"The Commission record is replete with examples of challenges faced by the police and the prosecution in dealing with marginalized individuals as informants and witnesses. I have found that the institutional inability to overcome these challenges contributed to the failures in the missing women cases," Oppal wrote in his Nov. 19, 2012, final report, titled Forsaken.

"Vulnerable and intimidated witnesses should be supported throughout their participation in the criminal justice process, including through provision of social supports, counselling and witness accommodations during testimony."

Specifically, Oppal called on greater protections after reviewing Crown's 1998 decision to stay several charges, including attempted murder, against Pickton because the victim — who survived a stabbing at the serial killer's home and escaped the year before — was deemed an unreliable witness because of her drug addiction.

Pickton continued killing women from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside until his arrest in 2002. He was convicted on six counts of second-degree murder in 2007.

Another 20 murder charges against Pickton were stayed in 2010, after his conviction was upheld by both the B.C. Court of Appeal and Supreme Court of Canada.

Missing Women's Inquiry Commissioner Wally Oppal pauses as he speaks to reporters after the public inquiry concluded more than seven months of hearings in Vancouver on Wednesday June 6, 2012. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Though Oppal found the decision to stay the charges "was made with integrity" and was in line with Criminal Justice Branch policies at the time, he took issue with the lack of support offered to the victim and her treatment by police investigators and prosecutors.

"In the end, she was nobody's victim," wrote Oppal. "This is not a criticism of the prosecution's actions in this case. It is a general critique of the criminal justice process, which continues to be deficient in its capacity to meet the needs of victims, particularly victims of sexual violence."

Oppal said it would be "fitting" for the victim's legacy to include policy changes to improve "the treatment of vulnerable witnesses like her by all justice system personnel."

In a statement on Monday, the Criminal Justice Branch said it has developed a tailored policy "recognizing that for cases involving allegations of serious personal injury, in particular, vulnerable victims and witnesses require ongoing support throughout the prosecution."

The new policy officially went into effect Dec. 29, 2014.

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Ecojustice launches lawsuit against College of Veterinarians

Salmon disease.
Court action by environmental law firm, biologist targets college's refusal to investigate complaint

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Atlantic salmon swim in a pen in Eastport, Maine, in this October 2008 photo. ROBERT F. BUKATY AND JASON LEIGHTON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ecojustice and biologist Alexandra Morton have launched a lawsuit against the College of Veterinarians of British Columbia for dismissing a complaint into alleged misconduct.

Morton lodged a written complaint with the college Sept. 13, 2013, regarding a 2007 memorandum written by a government veterinarian recognizing that infectious salmon anemia (ISA) virus has affected salmon worldwide but incorrectly advised that live Atlantic salmon eggs weren't being imported into B.C.

However, the lawsuit alleges that millions of Atlantic salmon eggs have been imported into B.C. since 1985 and that the veterinarian should have known.

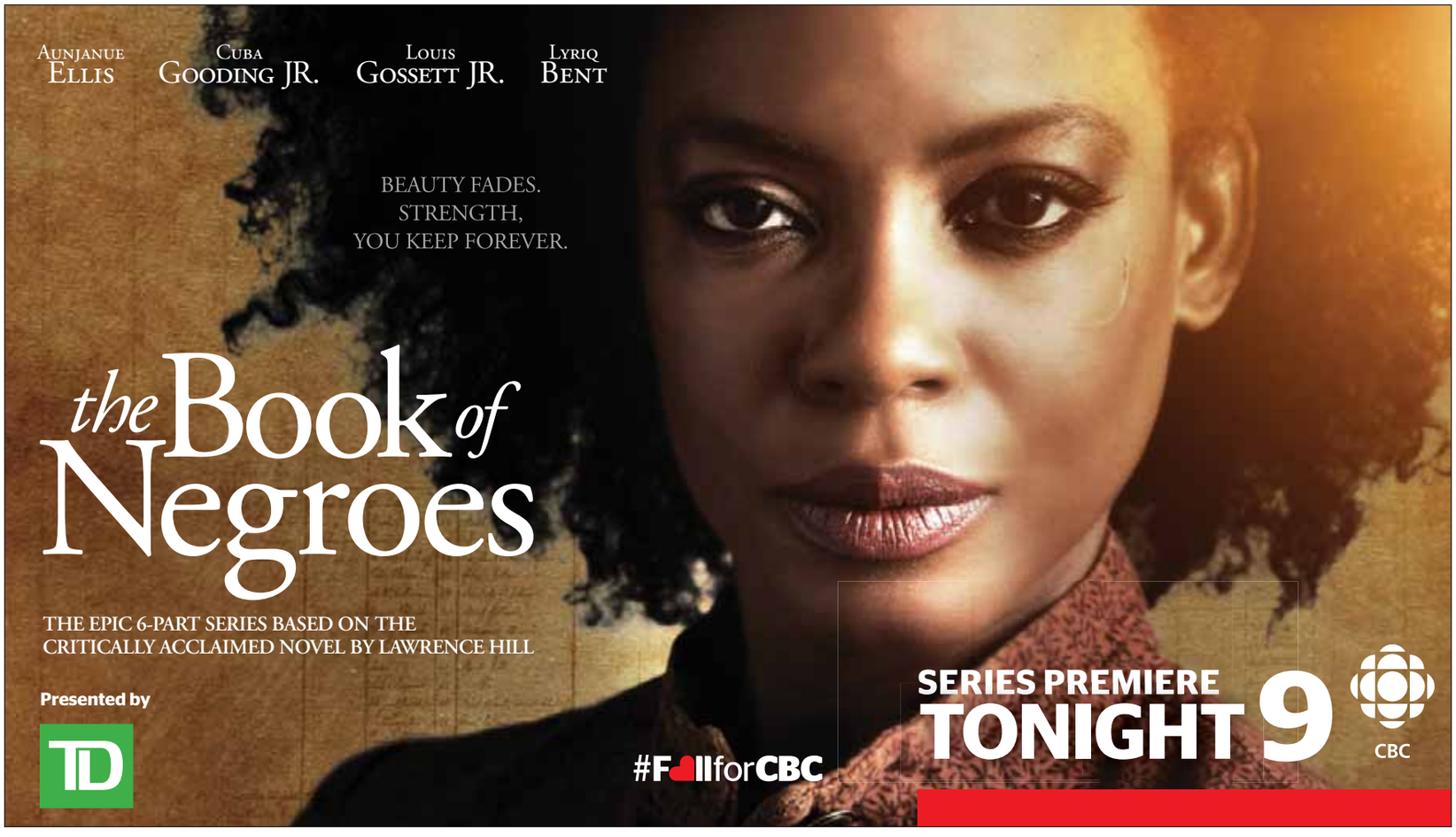
The veterinarian acknowledged during the Cohen Commission into declining salmon populations that the memorandum was not accurate.

In their petition to the court, Ecojustice says Morton believes "misinforming a minister of the facts relevant to risks posed by ISA" constitutes professional misconduct.

The advice "downplayed the risks of ISA to wild Pacific salmon by falsely stating that certain high-risk activities do not occur in B.C. — when they do," according to the lawsuit.

The College of Veterinarians twice dismissed Morton's request for an investigation, citing various sections under the Veterinarians Act, including lack of jurisdiction.

Ecojustice lawyer Morgan Blakley said he hopes a successful petition would force the college to reconsider Morton's original complaint.



Bride can keep in-laws' dowry after split from groom, judge says

Court battle. Groom's family gave his bride half-ownership of a $1-million Ottawa home, now source of a dispute

She was a beautiful, young exchange student from Iran. He was a handsome, well-spoken Canadian from a well-heeled Iranian family in Ottawa.

They met in calculus class at Carleton University, fell in love and just over a year later, the two 20-somethings got hitched in a lavish ceremony in Toronto attended by both their families.

In keeping with Iranian tradition, the groom's family gave the bride a generous gift — half ownership of a $1-million Ottawa home — a "dowry" that is the source of a bitter dispute between the now-separated couple and their families.

Last week, an Ottawa judge dismissed the husband's family's claims for an order that the bride, 23-year-old Shakiba Banifatemi, transfer her portion of the property back to her ex's parents.

The judge also dismissed claims for orders that she reimburse them for the cost of the wedding — around $50,000, the groom's mother says — and return any wedding gifts she received.

According to the judge's ruling documents, the Abdollahpours alleged Banifatemi "acted fraudulently by tricking" them into gifting her partial ownership of the home and having their son sponsor her for permanent residency.

They also alleged Banifatemi's Iran-based father told them all gifts would be returned if Banifatemi "left the marriage or acted inappropriately" toward the groom, 26-year-old Ahmad Reza Abdollahpour.

Justice Robert Smith found that the evidence did not support the allegations.

"The gift was made without any expectation of remuneration but with the expectation that Shakiba would marry Ahmad, which occurred," Smith said in his reasons for judgment.

"The parties entered into a valid marriage, which was consummated, and they lived together as man and wife for approximately one year and a half."

The documents also state that Banifatemi's father filed an affidavit denying making a promise to return gifts if his daughter left the marriage.

"Sometimes things don't work out, unfortunately, but you can't go back a year and half or two years later and allege that there was fraudulent intent," said Banifatemi's lawyer, Kevin Kavanagh.

The Abdollahpours, who own an Ottawa jewelry business, say they still want the gifts returned.

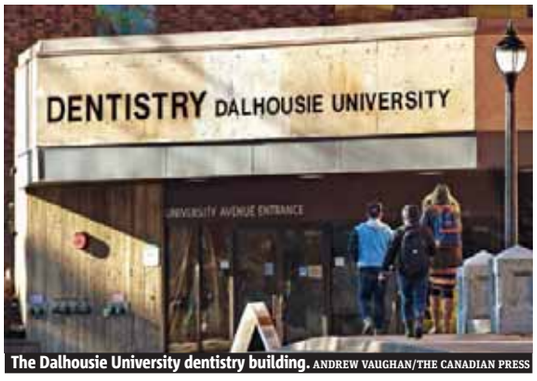
In Iranian culture the "dowry" is supposed to be returned if a wife leaves her husband, said Abdollahpour.

The family is unsure if they'll appeal the judge's decision, they told Torstar.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

An Ottawa judge's decision on a dowry case leaves the husband's parents without a claim to 50 per cent interest of an Ottawa home. Shakiba Banifatemi and Ahmad Abdollahpour split up in Dec. 2013. CONTRIBUTED

Dalhousie rejects request to name accused students



The Dalhousie University dentistry building. ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dalhousie University has rejected a request from the licensing body that governs Ontario's dentists to hand over the names of 13 dental students accused of posting sexually violent comments about women on a private Facebook page.

University spokesman Brian Leadbetter says the university in Halifax has an obligation to protect the privacy of its students.

He also restated the university's position in an email statement on Tuesday that the online comments were deeply offensive, degrading to women and unacceptable.

Irwin Fefergrad, registrar of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario, said Monday the governing body wanted the names to make sure that if any of the students involved apply for licences in the province they would face questions from the college.

Fefergrad said if the names are withheld, the college would have to ask every Dalhousie graduate seeking a licence if they had been the subject of a complaint or an inquiry at the university.

University president Richard Florizone announced Monday that the school had suspended the clinical privileges of the 13 students.

According to the CBC, members of the Class of DDS Gentlemen page on Facebook voted on which woman they'd like to have "hate" sex with and joked about using chloroform on women.

In another post, a woman is shown in a bikini with a caption that says, "Bang until stress is relieved or unconscious (girl)."

The Facebook page has since been taken down.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Response

The posts and the university's initial response prompted rallies, calls for the men's expulsion and a demand by some faculty members for an independent inquiry into how the school handled the incident.

Inspired by Pickton case

New policy aims to support vulnerable witnesses

The failure of Crown prosecutors to press a drug-addicted woman nearly murdered by Robert Pickton to testify against the serial killer has inspired new policy to support vulnerable witnesses.

B.C.'s criminal justice branch has implemented a series of new regulations that will help victims participate in criminal prosecutions, fulfilling a key recommendation made by the public inquiry looking into Vancouver's missing women.

A 1997 trial against Pickton was called off when the Crown decided the woman he attacked was unreliable as a witness because she was a heroin addict.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Protests planned

Bill Cosby worried about disruption at Ontario shows

Comedian Bill Cosby promised his Canadian fans "the show of their life" Tuesday as he urged them not to get involved if protesters disrupt any of the shows he has planned in Ontario this week.

Cosby's international tour rolls on despite growing allegations of sexual assault against the veteran TV star, with scheduled stops in Kitchener on Wednesday night, London on Thursday and Hamilton on Friday. Protests are being organized outside the Cosby shows in each city. Cosby has cancelled or postponed at least 10 shows on his current tour due to sex assault allegations, but the three in Ontario will go ahead. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Edmonton

Mass murder highlights need for awareness: Police

Police say the recent mass murder of eight people in Edmonton underlines the need for public awareness of domestic violence.

Staff Sgt. Sean Armstrong of the domestic offender crimes section says family abuse is society's responsibility. He says there are many agencies that offer help for victims, if they want it.

Phu Lam shot seven people in his home on Dec. 28, including his wife, eight-year-old son and three-year-old niece.

The next day he shot and killed a woman in another house where he was looking for someone else, then killed himself. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Texas. Gunman, one other killed at veterans' clinic

A gunman opened fire at a veterans' medical clinic in West Texas on Tuesday, killing one other person, officials said. The gunman was also killed.

Investigators did not say whether the gunman killed himself or was killed by someone else. They also did not provide any details on the victim or the gunman or provide a possible motive for the shooting.

Fort Bliss Maj. Gen. Stephen M. Twitty said the shooting happened at the El Paso Veterans Affairs Health Care System's clinic, which is in a complex that includes the William Beaumont Army Medical Center. The entire complex was locked down Tuesday as authorities responded to the shooting.

"The alleged shooter is dead, and we have one casualty. That casualty is deceased. All other VA patients and staff are safe," said Twitty, commanding officer of nearby Fort Bliss.

"Everything is under control and there is no immediate threat to Fort Bliss or the local community," he said.

The VA clinic will be closed Wednesday, said its acting director, Peter Dancy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York

Three questioned in police shooting

Three suspects were being questioned Tuesday about the shootings of two New York City plainclothes police officers responding to a grocery store robbery, authorities said.

One of the suspects was seen on a surveillance video from the crime scene in the Bronx, police said.

Both officers are listed in stable condition.

The shooting occurred around 10:30 p.m. Monday. The officers were coming off their shift when they and three other plainclothes officers responded to the robbery report. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jury selection begins in Boston terror trial

Marathon bombing. More than 400 potential jurors got their first look at the man charged with plotting attack

In this courtroom sketch, Boston Marathon bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, third from right, is depicted with his lawyers and U.S. District Judge George O'Toole Jr., right, as O'Toole addresses potential jurors at the federal courthouse on Tuesday in Boston. JANE FLAVELL COLLINS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

As prospective jurors got their first look at Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the young man accused of bombing the renowned Boston Marathon, it became clear that choosing a jury in the closely watched terror case would not be a quick or simple process.

U.S. District Judge George O'Toole Jr. told the first 400 people called for jury duty that choosing a panel of 12 jurors and six alternates for the highly anticipated trial was expected to take at least three weeks.

He told the potential jurors not to think of the trial as "an annoying burden," but as a needed service and an "important duty of citizenship."

Tsarnaev is accused of planning and carrying out the twin bombings that killed three people and wounded more than 260 others near the marathon's finish line on April 15, 2013. Prosecutors say Tsarnaev and his brother, now dead, also killed an MIT police officer several days after the bombings.

The prosecution and Tsarnaev's lawyers have begun the process of trying to find fair and impartial jurors. Jurors must also be willing, if Tsarnaev is convicted, to consider imposing the death penalty in a state that abolished its own death penalty three decades ago. Tsarnaev is being tried under the federal death penalty.

Defence lawyers have asked repeatedly that the trial be moved from Boston, where the bombings had a deep emotional impact. O'Toole has refused so far.

Prosecutors say Tsarnaev and his brother, Tamerlan Tsarnaev — ethnic Chechens who had lived in the United States for about a decade — carried out the bombings in retaliation for U.S. wars in Muslim countries. Tamerlan, 26, died in a gunfight with police days after the bombings.

The defence is expected to argue that Dzhokhar had a difficult childhood and fell under the influence of his older brother. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 84.55¢ (–0.56¢)

TSX 14,246.77 (- 145.93)

OIL $47.93 US (- $2.11)

GOLD $1,219.40 US (+ $15.40)

Natural gas: $2.938 US (+5.6¢)
Dow Jones: 17,371.64 (- 130.01)

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Luxury brand

Coach expanding footwear collection

Coach, the luxury handbag and accessories company, is buying Stuart Weitzman Holdings for about $530 million US.

The deal is expected to bolster Coach's image while creating growth opportunities as it struggles to turn around its brand under new CEO Victor Luis. Some analysts worry the deal could be a distraction to its core business. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Venezuela

McDonald's serves yuca instead of fries

Venezuela's more than 100 McDonald's franchises have run out of potatoes and are now serving alternatives like deep-fried arepa flatbreads or yuca, a starchy staple of traditional cooking.

A contract dispute with dock workers is being blamed.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gadget show profiles 4-times-as-sharp TVs

International CES. Internet-only television aimed at cord-cutters, curved TV sets, Ultra HD some of the hottest trends at tech show

Toshiyuki Osawa, president of Sharp Electronics Corporation, introduces Sharp 4K Ultra HD televisions Monday at the International CES in Las Vegas. Also known as Ultra HD, 4k offers four times the sharpness of today's high-definition video. JOHN LOCHER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One of the biggest changes in television this year will be an increase in channels available online, with no separate cable or satellite subscription.

At the International CES gadget show in Las Vegas Monday, Dish Network unveiled an Internet-only subscription offering in the U.S. that includes ESPN. Sony Corp. also has an Internet television service, PlayStation Vue, expected to debut by the end of March.

Now that 4K — also known as Ultra HD — TV sets have dropped in price, with some models available for less than $1,000, TV makers are looking for ways to make their sets stand out. 4K offers four times the sharpness of today's high-definition video.

Sharp is turning to an engineering trick to make its high-end 4K set look even sharper. While TVs typically show colours by mixing red, green and blue subpixels, Sharp's top-of-the-line model will add yellow as a fourth subpixel to improve colours.

Sony is also introducing new 4K television models this year, and at a news event, the company promised to create more 4K content to watch on those sets. Sony said four popular shows — The Goldbergs, The Blacklist, Masters of Sex and The Night Shift — will soon be available in 4K. It also said it's working with partners including Netflix and YouTube to deliver more 4K streaming video.

Samsung is offering a premium line with better brightness and richer colours, not just increased sharpness. It uses a technology called quantum dot — essentially a layer of materials that allows for purer colours and a wider colour range. It will be called SUHD and cost more than regular 4K sets.

Samsung is also pushing curved TVs, including one high-end model with a flat screen that can bend, or curve, when the viewer wants a more immersive experience. LG announced quantum-dot and curved sets, too, including a bendable model.

LG is also pushing organic LED screens with richer colours and pure black — the kind typically limited to smaller displays such as phones because of price.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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VOICES

ALL THE CONTENT, NONE OF THE GUILT

Metro's Matt LaForge doesn't feel bad about all the unblocking he's done on Netflix, but he wouldn't be able to explain why *nearly* as well without all the contraband he's watched

MATT LAFORGE
readers@metronews.ca

I have a confession that I'm almost excited to make, such is my lack of remorse over it: For more than three years now, I've been living in Canada but regularly watching what we up here call "American Netflix." I'm an inveterate unblocker. And, as Butch Coolidge said to Esmeralda Villalobos in Pulp Fiction, which I fondly remember streaming via American Netflix, I don't feel the least bit bad about it.

There's no way to know exactly how many unblockers this country harbours, but surveys suggest that the number is high. No surprise there: Unblocking is tempting (Parks and Recreation, It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia and the ESPN 30 for 30 documentary series vs. Mr. D) and it's easy (if you can use Google, you can do it). And, most important, until earlier this week, unblocking was improbably, spine-tinglingly consequence-free, like wearing a great-fitting pair of pants borrowed from a friend who has long since forgotten he ever owned them.

But the party may be ending. Last weekend, a couple of websites reported that Netflix had begun cracking down on unblockers. Then, on Monday, Netflix issued a statement that, in effect said, "We're not OK with unblocking, we never have been OK with unblocking, and we have a prerogative deriving from our obligations to the companies we license our content from to make sure that streamers are streaming from where they're supposed to be streaming from."

Well, OK then.

Look, I wasn't born yesterday. I know when it's time to return the pants. So, in light of Netflix's tough talk, I'm hereby cooling it on the unblocking until all this blows over. But do I feel bad about the unblocking I've already done? In the words of Long Duk Dong (Sixteen Candles, another illicit stream I look back on with tender affection), "No way, Jose!"

The main reason I feel this way is that Netflix got its money. Unblocking isn't file-sharing, which I might as well admit I've also done an inordinate amount of. When you download a movie torrent, the movie's copyright holder gets nothing. But when someone in Canada unblocks American Netflix, the Canadian copyright holders with whom Netflix has licensing agreements still get their pre-negotiated pieces of your $8 a month. The arrangement is not what any of the parties to the licensing deals had in mind, but, take it from me, it's relatively easy on the conscience.

The other reason is that Netflix sends mixed messages. We're talking about a company that has since Day 1 of my subscription been willing to let me share my login and password with my parents, my girlfriend, her parents, my sister, a few of my more trifling cousins, a couple of guys I at one time owed money to, and basically whoever else has troubled themselves over the past three years to so much as ask .

This is not to mention all the friends, relatives and acquaintances with whom the aforementioned are sharing my login and password, or to mention however many other of *their* respective friends, relatives, and acquaintances are cutting in on the action, and on and on and on, such that as we speak my sign-in credentials are spreading at the speed of shamelessness to every corner of an infinitely ramifying Brady Bunch-intro-style matrix of moochery.

The company that stood idly by when my dad called my sister one cold December night and said, "Get the hell off Netflix — your mother and I want to watch Wallander" when it could have insisted on making him pay his own $8 a month is now, all of a sudden, going by the book? You can't be serious. When anything-goes cool parents get a call from the truant officer and decide on a dime to become disciplinarians, they face what's called a credibility problem. Same goes here.

Hear this, fellow unblockers: We've had a great run, and in the event that this crackdown proves to be a bluff, we'll have another. Don't let misplaced guilt ruin it. To quote the tragically doomed Cyrus (The Warriors — you never forget your first unblock): "I say, the future is ours."

Ban on tobogganing a slippery slope

PAUL SULLIVAN
vancouver@metronews.ca

Winter is bad enough, so why are we making it worse?

It's true; cities all over North America are banning tobogganing for the same reason bureaucratic weasels ban anything: It's dangerous. OK, it's dangerous. Almost 230,000 kids were injured sledding in the U.S. in the decade between 1997 and 2007, according to the Center for Injury Research and Policy. But so is everything else. In that same reckless nation, about 275,000 kids suffer non-fatal bicycle injuries each year. About 82,000 kids are treated for trampoline injuries, and 61,000 kids are hurt skateboarding.

As far as I can tell, there are no statistics on the danger involved in getting up every morning, but few will argue that it is eventually fatal. Still, this tobogganing menace has to be stopped, and cities from Dubuque, Iowa, to Montville, N.J., have climbed on the ban-wagon. Closer to home, sledding is banned in Hamilton and numerous slopes in the GTA. They'd ban it in Vancouver if there was any snow.

Let's not forget that while they're busy banning winter fun in Iowa it's OK to drive around with a handgun, so what's the point? The point, of course, is that they're really afraid of lawsuits.

But bans don't even work. Some guy in Hamilton was awarded $900,000 after he injured his spine in a sledding accident, even though sledding is banned in Hamilton. The court decided that even though he was breaking the law, the city should have warned him about that snow-covered ditch. Really? This ban on tobogganing will take us down a slippery slope that's guaranteed to end in a wipeout.

There's a school in Toronto that has banned all balls except those foam Nerf balls. Try playing basketball with a Nerf ball. And there's a woman in Vaughan, Ont., who is trying to get the oak trees near the school chopped down because the acorns could cause anaphylactic shock in kids with nut allergies.

We're creating people who are good for only one thing: Texting with a helmet on.

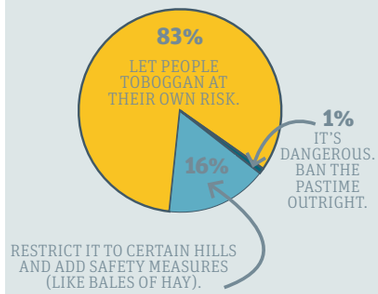
Meanwhile, the war on winter fun continues. Next up: The backyard skating rink. The city of Cornwall, Ont., ordered a family to dismantle its lovingly constructed rink because a neighbour complained and it violates various bylaws. The same thing happened recently in Sherbrooke, Que., where a neighbour complained that a local backyard rink was too "noisy."

Um, that's what fun sounds like. Banning sledding is one thing. The backyard rink is another. It's as Canadian as Tim Hortons, more so now that Tim's is owned by Burger King.

Ban the backyard rinks and you strike at the heart of Canadian hockey supremacy. We might as well just give back that junior hockey gold medal to Russia, where winter fun is compulsory.

We asked you:

HOW SHOULD CITIES HANDLE TOBOGGANING?


83%
LET PEOPLE TOBOGGAN AT THEIR OWN RISK.
1%
IT'S DANGEROUS. BAN THE PASTIME OUTRIGHT.
16%
RESTRICT IT TO CERTAIN HILLS AND ADD SAFETY MEASURES (LIKE BALES OF HAY).

Metro gets swabbed for OneMatch

Mark Watkin poses with Metro employee Jennifer O'Callaghan after she gets swabbed for OneMatch, the national stem cell donor registry. At any given time, close to 1,000 Canadians are waiting on a stem cell match. Watkin, who lost his daughter Sarah to cancer after she was unable to find a matching donor, is encouraging everyone to get swabbed and add their information to the registry. For more information, visit onematch.ca. LUKE SIMCOE/METRO

metro

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Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Russell Crowe ALL PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

Crowe tells actresses: Act your age and you'll have role to play

Russell Crowe sat down with Australia's Women's Weekly — why, I'm not sure — and used the opportunity to take a certain generation of actresses to task for not acting their age.

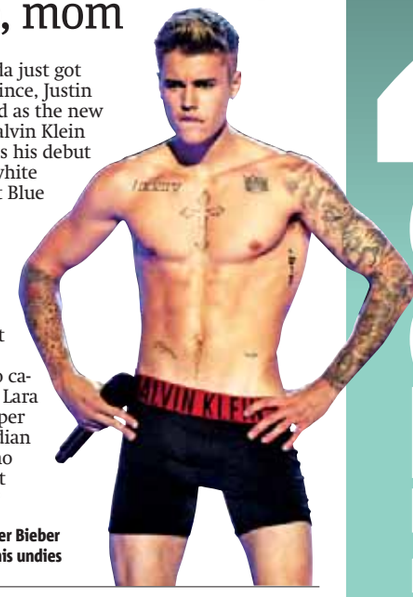
"To be honest, I think you'll find that the woman who is saying that (the good roles for women have dried up is) the woman who at 40, 45, 48, still wants to play the ingenue, and can't understand why she's not being cast as the 21-year-old," he says. "If you are willing to live in your own skin, you can work as an actor. If you are trying to pretend that you're still the young buck when you're my age, it just doesn't work."

Now, before you get out your pitchforks, Crowe has some anecdotal evidence to back up his claims.

"I have heard of an actress, part of her fee negotiation was getting the number of children she was supposed to have lessened," he says. "Can you believe this? This (character) was a woman with four children, and there were reasons why she had to have four children — mainly, she lived in a cold climate and there was nothing to do but fornicate all day — so quit arguing, just play the role."

Also, Crowe insists that he's given the same tough love to himself, saying, "The point is, you do have to be prepared to accept that there are stages in life. So I can't be the Gladiator forever." But come on, Russ. Some of us actually saw your dreadful Robin Hood. But hey, maybe it's a really, really recent revelation for him.

See, walking around with your skivvies showing does help, mom



The biggest ego in Canada just got bigger. Pop's reigning prince, Justin Bieber, has been unveiled as the new face — and body — of Calvin Klein Underwear. Bieber makes his debut in a series of black-and-white photos featuring his best Blue Steel and a suspiciously rounded and unrealistic bulge. He kicked things off with a six-second video feature showing him playing drums. We're pretty sure that, at least, is all Bieber.

In the ads, Bieber also cavorts with British model Lara Stone, who is a real trooper — and the wife of comedian David Walliams. Hey, who wants to just think about Marky Mark for a while?

Speculation started shortly after Bieber appeared at Fashion Rocks in his undies

Game of Thrones to take series finale to the Imax

Peter Dinklage as Tyrion Lannister in Game of Thrones.

The biggest show on television is about to get a lot bigger. Like, Imax bigger. HBO is supersizing its hit Game of Thrones, bringing the final two episodes of last season to Imax screens later this month along with an exclusive trailer for season five. The engagement runs Jan. 23 to 29, with tickets reportedly going on sale "in the coming days" at Imax's site — and possibly as early as today. So get on that.

The episodes and trailers will occupy 150 Imax screens across North America for the week, offering the first real glimpse of the new season, debuting in April, aside from a few vague clips online about three-eyed ravens and the vision "becoming clear."

Blake Lively quietly rings in the New Year as a mom

Blake Lively certainly knows how to keep things under wraps. The former Gossip Girl star and husband Ryan Reynolds reportedly welcomed their first child in December, just before the New Year, but managed to keep mum about it until now. The baby, whose gender and name have not yet been announced, arrived prematurely, but both Lively and the newborn are "healthy and doing well" now, sources tell Page Six. This is the first child for Lively and Reynolds, who were married in 2012.

And if previous reports are any indication, we know just how the new parents will be celebrating their arrival: "She's saying she wants to get pregnant really soon after she pops this baby out," a source told E! News back in October. And both Lively and Reynolds have made no secret about the fact that they want a big family. So maybe let's give them some privacy this week?

Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds

Katy plots to shake, shake, shake things up with Taylor

This might actually get me interested in the Super Bowl. Katy Perry is reportedly planning to work a reference to her ongoing feud with Taylor Swift into her halftime performance next month, according to Hollywood Life.

"She wants to make a statement with her performance and show that she is the biggest female act in the world, and she wants to show that to everyone including Taylor, who she has a feud with," a source says. "Katy will be doing something on stage during her performance that will be directed towards Taylor. She is working on it to be a visual or a lyric-related jab."

Oh man, the possibilities! Will Perry make out with and dump Harry Styles on stage? Burn a photo of adorable kitty Olivia Benson in effigy? Or maybe pretend to be a country artist for the first few songs in her medley, then completely abandon the genre? We'll have to wait and see.

Katy Perry

SCENE

What's due on your small screen in 2015

TV premieres. Pop the popcorn and get out your Snuggie: These new series will keep you glued to the couch throughout the year

With leading names behind the camera and in front of it, this year's new television series already have people talking, long before the shows' arrival on the air. For those whose New Year's resolutions do not include spending less time in front of the small screen, here is a selection of must-see series premiering throughout 2015.

Better Call Saul
After bidding farewell to their favourite program in September 2013, Breaking Bad fans will soon reunite with some of its characters in a spinoff. Walter White and Jesse Pinkman will not necessarily be in the picture, but their shady lawyer Saul Goodman, played by Bob Odenkirk, should help make up for their absence. Viewers will learn about his life prior to meeting the two meth dealers, starting six years earlier, when his name was still Jimmy McGill.

Air date: The dramatic comedy premieres Feb. 8 on AMC, just after The Walking Dead, and will then air on Monday nights from Feb. 9.

Battle Creek
There is some impressive star power in this new CBS police series, both behind the scenes and on the screen. Hailing from Vince Gilligan and David Shore (the creators of Breaking Bad and House MD, respectively), the show will debut with an episode directed by Bryan Singer. Josh Duhamel and Dean Winters co-star as two detectives who have opposing world views, but are forced to work together to tackle crime in Battle Creek, Mich.

Air date: The show premieres March 1 on CBS.

Bloodline
An introspective psychological thriller, this new production from the creators of Damages revolves around themes of competition, jealousy and betrayal among brothers and sisters. The siblings' secrets and private wounds come to light when one of their own, the black sheep of the family, returns to the fold.

Netflix has put together an all-star cast for the drama, including Kyle Chandler, Sam Shepard and Sissy Spacek.

Air date: The drama is due to premiere in March on Netflix.

Wayward Pines
Following in the footsteps of Twin Peaks, M. Night Shyamalan's first small-screen project will combine suspense and crime drama with fantasy elements. Matt Dillon, Melissa Leo, Terrence Howard, Juliette Lewis, Carla Gugino and Toby Jones are cast in this miniseries, which will centre on a federal agent's complex investigation into the disappearance of two colleagues in a strange town in Idaho. Soon after his arrival, Agent Ethan Burke comes to realize that getting out of Wayward Pines will not be an easy task.

Air date: The drama will debut May 14 on Fox and simultaneously in 125 countries worldwide.

Daredevil
The first series resulting from Marvel and Netflix's recent tie-up, Daredevil will join a growing roster of superhero productions for the small screen. Following in the footsteps of Ben Affleck, who starred in a movie adaptation of the comic, Charlie Cox portrays Matt Murdoch, a blind lawyer by day who by night becomes Daredevil, a superhero with enhanced senses. Vincent D'Onofrio and Rosario Dawson also feature in the series, which will be followed in the coming years by three others dedicated to other Marvel heroes — Jessica Jones, Luke Cage, Iron Fist — and an event mini-series on The Defenders, a group that will likely unite the four superheroes.

Air date: The drama is scheduled to arrive on Netflix in May.

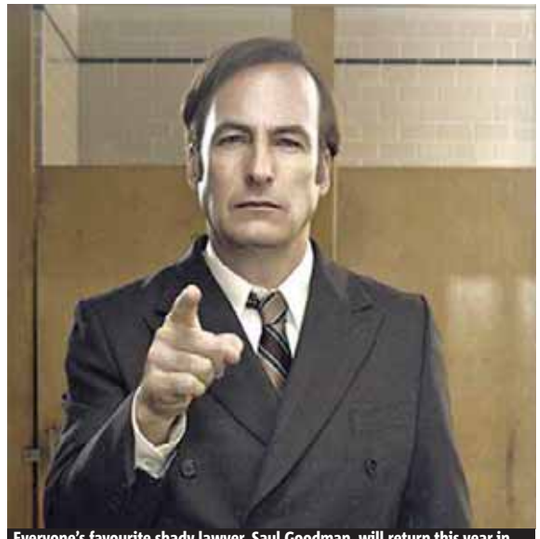
Martin Scorsese's rock 'n' roll series
When Martin Scorsese, Mick Jagger, Terence Winter and HBO work hand in hand on a new musical series, the result is bound to be interesting, to say the least. Their untitled project has piqued the curiosity of viewers and critics alike.

Set in the music industry of the 1970s, the drama will center on Richie, the founder and president of a New York record label with an ear for fresh, promising talent. Bobby Cannavale plays this title character and is joined by Olivia Wilde, Ray Romano, Juno Temple and James Jagger, the son of the Rolling Stones front man. With its star-studded cast and top-notch production team, it's no surprise the show is among the most eagerly anticipated of 2015.

Air date: The rock 'n' roll drama is due to arrive on HBO before the end of the year. AFP

True Detective, Season 2

- While not a new series, HBO's crime anthology show will take on an entirely new cast and setting for its second cycle, echoing the format of American Horror Story, among others.
- In Season 2, premiering this summer on HBO, the backdrop has moved from Louisiana to California, and Matthew McConaughey and Woody Harrelson have given way to a cast with similarly renowned names. Colin Farrell, Vince Vaughn, Rachel McAdams, Kelly Reilly and Taylor Kitsch will pick up the baton with a new investigation.


Everyone's favourite shady lawyer, Saul Goodman, will return this year in the Breaking Bad spinoff series Better Call Saul. CONTRIBUTED

Battle Creek, by Breaking Bad and House MD creators Vince Gilligan and David Shore respectively, will debut March 1. CONTRIBUTED

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If energizing exercise and a breath of fresh air is something you need after a long haul flight, be sure to sign up for Bikes and Hikes' wildly popular L.A. In A Day Bike Adventure. Explore every nook and cranny of Los Angeles with a friendly guide via a 50-kilometre full-day pedal. The tour offers a truly unique view of the city, allowing guests to explore from Beverly Hills to Santa Monica Pier, Venice Beach and beyond.

Voda Spa is WeHo's best-kept secret and the perfect spot for those looking to fight jet lag, nurse that hangover or simply rest and relax. The treatments and saunas here reflect cultures from across the globe and include traditional Russian banya, Swedish cedar dry sauna and a Turkish wet steam bath.

Be sure to sign up for the signature platza treatment, a rigorous massage performed with venik — a leafy, fragrant bundle of oak, birch and eucalyptus, which soaks in warm water and is applied using rhythmic taps and strokes.

At night, head to DBA Hollywood, where film fans pack to the brim for an evening filled with song and dance.

The production team at For the Record puts on dazzling interactive musicals based on the work of famous Hollywood directors with past triumphs including Scorsese, John Hughes and Tarantino. The team is currently wrapping up an extended run of Baz Luhrmann, a three-hour extravaganza inspired by the Australian directors cinematic hits Strictly Ballroom, Romeo and Juliet, Moulin Rouge and The Great Gatsby. If you look closely through the dimly lit theatre you're sure to spot Rumer Willis (daughter of Demi Moore and Bruce Willis) who has performed in the last few productions.

The Chamberlain's rooftop pool is the perfect place to relax after a long leg of flying. ANDREW DOBSON/METRO

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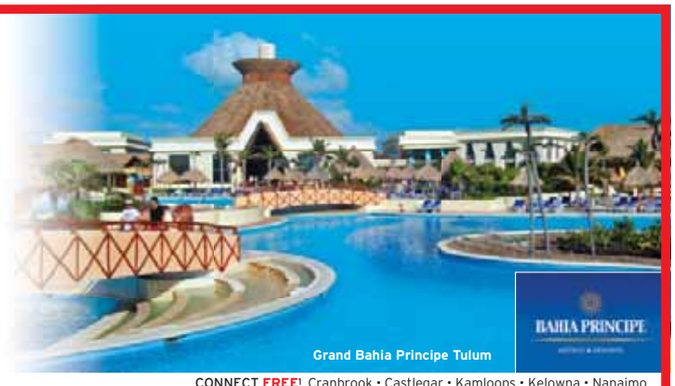

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New year

Put these spots on your 2015 trip list

ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie
life@metronews.ca

Kate and the Jolie-Pitts can't be wrong in picking Malta as a sojourn spot. ISTOCK

Looking to holiday somewhere out of the ordinary this coming year? I asked some industry experts to share some unique destination suggestions for 2015.

The Jolie-Pitts recently bestowed their celebrity endorsement upon Malta when they had a working honeymoon on this European island nation while filming By the Sea. This past season's racers on The Amazing Race showed us just how blue the waters of the Blue Grotto are when they rappelled down into this popular tourist attraction. And, if the Hollywood effect isn't enough, Malta should get some royal treatment in 2015. This past fall, the Duchess of Cambridge missed her first solo trip overseas when a visit to the republic was cancelled due to severe morning sickness. Cheapflights.ca predicts that she will plan a makeup visit in 2015 with royal baby No. 2 in tow.

Having come off 2014 as the host of the FIFA World Cup and preparing to again welcome the world for the 2016 Summer Olympics, this is Brazil's gap year. According to travelzoo.ca, the country will open 400 new hotels over the next year, enticing more travellers to hot spots such as Rio de Janeiro and Iguazu Falls. Air Canada has increased its service to this South American hot spot by adding three direct flights between Toronto and Rio. If your curiosity is piqued, and you want to avoid the crowds and costs of an Olympic year, now is the time to go.

Topographically speaking, 2015 is the year to get high. July will mark 150 years since the first Matterhorn ascent and Zermatt, Switzerland is celebrating with open-air performances, festivals and sporting events. The 101-year-old Hörnli Hut, the starting point for a Matterhorn climb, will reopen after being refurbished. Meanwhile Salzburg, Austria will be alive with The Sound of Music as the Rodgers & Hammerstein's gem marks its 50th year. The city will host tours and singalongs.

Hit the Kootenay loop if you're looking for powder

Alpine. B.C.'s Powder Highway offers a laid-back way to enjoy some of the best skiing

Red Mountain near Rossland, B.C. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

For many in the skiing world, the resorts of Canada's Powder Highway in British Columbia's Kootenay region are secrets they'd rather not share with the public.

The circuit links eight mountain resorts and many times more Nordic, heli- and cat-ski operations across 677 kilometres.

"There's very little out there that can rival the quality and terrain in the Kootenays," says Ian Johnston, a Vancouver transplant to Rossland where he skis at Red Mountain.

"If you want powder, you go to the Kootenays," he says. "If you go to party, you go to Whistler," referring to the better-known and massive ski resort that hosted the 2010 Winter Olympics, a nine-hour drive from Rossland.

Like most locals, Johnston grudgingly agrees that those along the Powder Highway need to share their light, airy powder bonanza with the world. The laid-back resorts offer miles of trails, massive quantities of vertical feet, heli-skiing and communities where skiing is a passion passed from generation to generation.

The gems along the highway through the pristine valleys of the western slope of the Rockies and the Purcell and Selkirk mountain ranges are: starting in the East Kootenay, Fernie Alpine Resort near the mining town of Fernie; Kicking Horse Mountain Resort west of the entrance to Yoho National Park; Kimberley Alpine Resort outside the picturesque city of Kimberley; Panorama Mountain Resort outside Invermere; and Revelstoke Mountain Resort west of Kicking Horse.

Moving into the West Kootenay region, Red Mountain Resort is minutes from the cities of Rossland and Trail, and Whitewater Ski sits above the trendy lakeside city of Nelson.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Flights are from Vancouver via Air Transat. Prices shown are per person, based on double occupancy in lead room category, unless otherwise stated. Space and prices are subject to availability at time of booking. Prices advertised are valid from January 7 to 8, 2015 only. Taxes and fees are extra and noted above. Travel Agency fees may apply. For full descriptions and terms and conditions, refer to the Transat Holidays 2014-2015 Sun Collection brochure or transatholidays.com. Transat Holidays is a division of Transat Tours Canada Inc., and is a registered travel wholesaler in British Columbia (Reg #2454) with offices at 555 West Hastings Street, Suite 950,Vancouver, BC V6B 4N6. ®Trademarks of AIR MILES International Trading B.V. Used under license by LoyaltyOne, Inc, and Transat Distribution Canada Inc. Marlin Travel is a division of Transat Distribution Canada Inc. BC Reg.#23567 ON Reg: 50015084. Head Office: 191 The West Mall, Suite 700, Etobicoke, ON, M9C 5K8. Base reward mile offer is 1/$35 on vacation packages, cruise fares and charter flights. Not applicable on scheduled airline or rail tickets, hotel and car reservations paid locally, taxes, service fees, non-commissionable items, foreign exchange and insurance. Other conditions may apply.

Bahamas trek? Don't skip Nassau

Travel time. History, arts, culture and food — take a break from the incredible beaches

VAWN HIMMELSBACH
For Metro

One of the oldest cities in the Western Hemisphere, Nassau, has a distinctly colonial charm that is the historic heart of the Bahamas.

Nassau offers year-round cultural events and festivals like Junkanoo — an overnight street parade. THE BAHAMAS MINISTRY OF TOURISM PHOTOS

Get your Junkanoo on

Junkanoo is an overnight street parade, ordinarily held Boxing Day and New Year's Day from 2 a.m. to noon. In May, Nassau will host the Junkanoo Carnival, which is loosely modelled after Mardis Gras. Junkanoo troupes (from 500 to 1,000 members) in extravagant costumes wind their way through the streets of downtown Nassau to the hypnotic rhythms of goat-skin drums, brass horns and cowbells.

The Bahamas is made up of 700 islands, including cays and islets, amidst the world's third-largest barrier reef and some of the clearest water on the planet, with visibility up to 30 metres.

It's a paradise for sun, sand and surf, but for those who haven't been to Nassau — the capital and historic heart of the Bahamas, located on New Providence Island — there is now more reason to leave the resort and experience some Bahamian culture.

Nassau's ideal location — its main harbour is protected by Paradise Island, which has been developed as a playground for tourists with resorts, nightclubs and a casino — made it attractive to pirates back in the day.

Indeed, the British Colonial Hilton is built on the site of Old Fort Nassau, former residence of legendary pirate Blackbeard. Eventually, in 1718, British colonialists figured out how to navigate the waters and kicked the pirates out.

"Nassau is one of the oldest cities in the Western Hemisphere, almost 600 years old," said Ambrose Morris, communications manager with the Bahamas Tourist Office for Canada.

As a result, the city has a colonial charm, with several historic sites that are worth a visit, including Gambier, Adelaide and Fox Hill (three historic villages settled by liberated slaves in the 1800s).

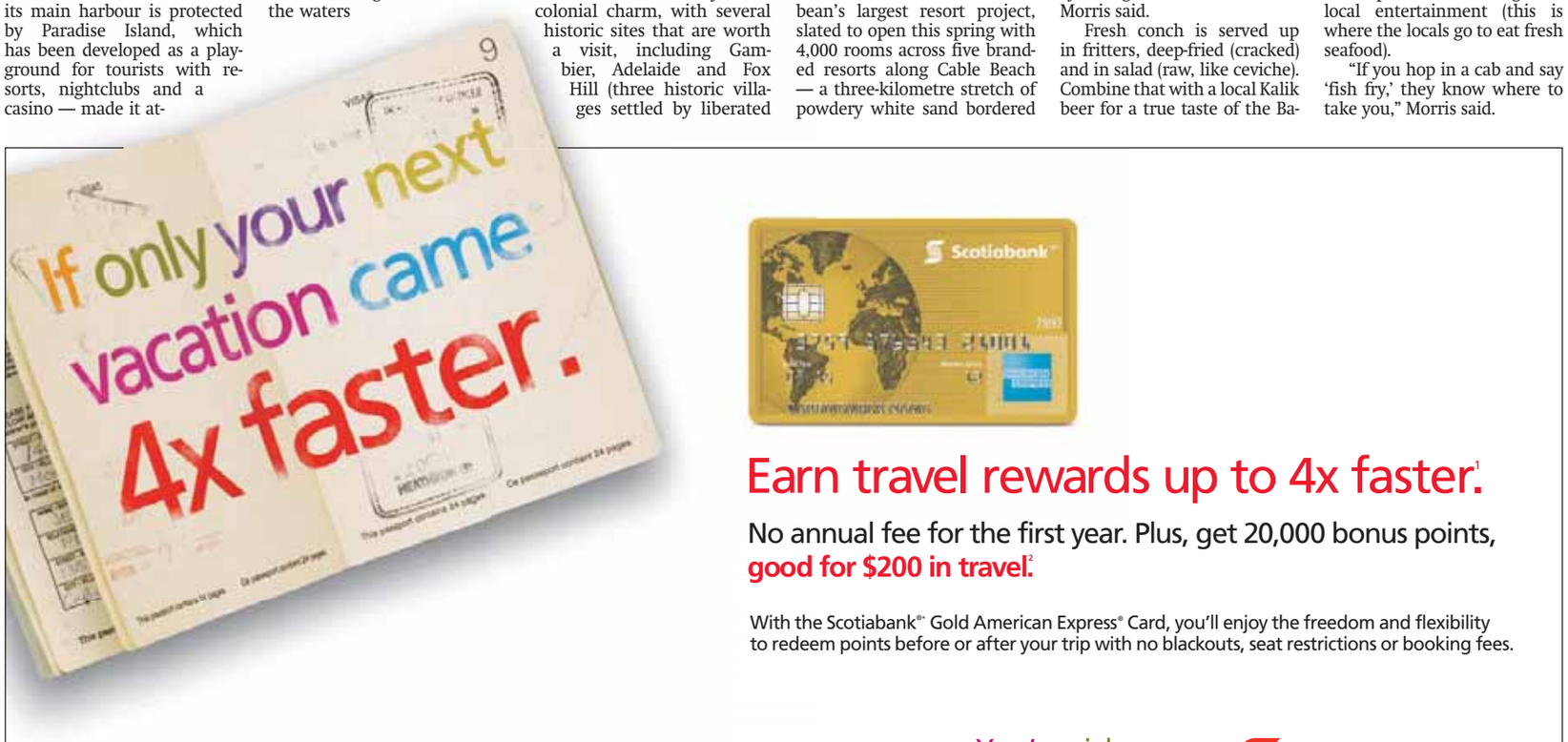
While there is plenty of history here, Nassau is also transforming itself by investing in the revitalization of Bay Street, its downtown core, and offering year-round cultural events and festivals.

The Baha Mar is the Caribbean's largest resort project, slated to open this spring with 4,000 rooms across five branded resorts along Cable Beach — a three-kilometre stretch of powdery white sand bordered by swaying palm trees. But this project is also taking a sustainable approach: The installation of coral "antlers" along the shoreline promotes the growth of marine life and will eventually be covered by a living reef.

While in the Bahamas, "you've got to have the conch," Morris said.

Fresh conch is served up in fritters, deep-fried (cracked) and in salad (raw, like ceviche). Combine that with a local Kalik beer for a true taste of the Bahamas. For the best conch, Morris recommends heading over to Arawak Cay, named after the original West Indian inhabitants of the islands. Here, visitors can partake in the weekly fish fry, which offers up island cooking and local entertainment (this is where the locals go to eat fresh seafood).

"If you hop in a cab and say 'fish fry,' they know where to take you," Morris said.



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Are you suffering from professional envy?

Career. Instead of treating your career like a competition, focus on figuring out what matters to you.

RIANA TOPAN
TalentEgg.ca

Remember, it's as much about the journey to your dream job as it is finally getting it. Life's too short to concentrate on drawing online comparisons. ISTOCK

For a young professional, social media can sometimes be a challenge.

We're constantly being fed updates and information about what our friends and acquaintances are up to, making it easy for us to feel like what we are doing isn't measuring up.

While a bit of competition can be a good motivator, many students and grads can get caught up in their peers' successes.

If this sounds like you, here are a few ways you can handle your career envy.

Adjust your attitude

Remember that the things we see on social media are carefully chosen tidbits of information that reflect a person's best side.

Constantly comparing yourself to others will only frustrate and upset you. Take what you see with a grain of salt, and take a step back to get some perspective. The only person you should compare yourself to is you.

Keep in mind that building a successful career doesn't happen overnight. It takes time to cultivate skills, learn about your strengths and weaknesses, and work your way up to your dream job.

Even though you may feel pressured to reach certain professional milestones within a set time frame, there's value in trying things out and making a few mistakes along the way.

Rushing through the early stages of your career may mean you're less likely to end up where you want to be.

You could miss out on some amazing opportunities because you didn't take the time to take advantage of them.

It can be fun to see what other people are up to, but if you're feeling overwhelmed by what your peers are doing, take a break from social media and use that time for reflection and career planning.

Take pride in the successes you have had so far.

Take action

If you're looking to get ahead professionally, there are many things you can, and should, do to move your career along.

Set goals for what you want to achieve professionally.

Having a sense of direction will make it easier for you to stay positive, because you'll remember that what matters most is your dedication to reaching your end goal — not whether your job title or salary are on par with that of your friends.

For example, if you've always wanted to learn a new language or take a business management course, there's no time like the present to make it happen!

Try talking to your boss about taking on extra responsibilities to gain new experience and skills.

Going the extra mile can help you make a positive impression on your employer — and your initiative will look great on your resumé too.

Volunteering is another great way to further your career — any volunteer position can help you to learn and grow, meet new people, and build up your CV.

Want to work your way up your company's corporate ladder?

See if you can meet, and ideally, treat, a high-level executive to a coffee or lunch. Ask them about their career journey: What advice can they can pass on to you to help you achieve your goals?

Get up and go

Your future is brighter than you think

- At the end of the day, what matters is that you feel good about what you've accomplished.
- Keep yourself motivated, but remember that there is no right or wrong path; all you can do is try to make good choices based on the information you have at a given time and work to continuously and actively invest in yourself and your future.
- A little bit of hard work, strategic thinking and careful decision-making can go a long way in helping you to take your career to the next level. It just requires some kind of action; you have to be ready and willing to get out there and do what you need to do.

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Making the most of your morning

Career. Three simple tips to help you step up your morning game and set yourself up for a happier, more productive day

CELINE TARRANT
TalentEgg.ca

As tempting as it is to get ahead of email as soon as you wake up, don't reach for your smartphone right after the alarm clock. Leave the chatting for later, and only after everything on your 'must list' is complete. ISTOCK

Are you the type of person who's always forgetting something after a hasty morning departure to work or school? The new year is a great time to set goals to increase productivity. You don't have to be a morning person to use the wee hours more effectively.

Here's how to do it:

Minimize time-sucking tasks in the a.m.

Morning routines are full of time-consuming activities like choosing an outfit, making breakfast and packing lunch. These take far longer than they should when you're operating under an early-morning haze. Eliminate some stress and save time in the morning by taking care of these chores the night before. Decide what you're going to wear the next day, and lay all of it out ahead of time. This reduces the amount of time you need to spend getting ready, and you will look and feel more put together than if you left the fashion decisions for the morning.

Make and pack your lunch ahead of time so all you have to do is grab it and go. Select breakfast options that can be prepared the night before, and taken along on your morning commute. Not only is this a major morning time saver, but you are far more likely to make a healthy choice when you prep ahead. Choose a set location for important items like your keys, phone and wallet so they're right where you expect them to be in the morning.

Make your to-do list the night before

Instead of planning your day first thing in the morning, try making your to-do list before bed. When you wake up feeling stressed, it's easy to skip the list-making altogether and dive into your work so you feel productive right away.

Your to-do list should consist of a "must list" and a "wish list." The "must list" includes time-sensitive tasks that must get done. Your "wish list" is everything else.

Making your to-do list the night before helps you determine what your real priorities are (your "must list"), and mentally prepares you for the day ahead.

Listen up

Your daily morning routine is a prime time to do a little creative multitasking and learn something new.

- Podcasts and audiobooks are great for keeping your knowledge up-to-date without eating into precious time. It's easy to put one on in the background while you are getting ready in the morning, and they're a good way to spice up a long commute as well.

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Roll up robust flavours for dinner

Squash and Ricotta Rotelle. A rose sauce is a welcome alternative to more common red or white options

DINNER EXPRESS
Emily Richards
food@metronews.ca

Looking for something a little more fancy? Why not try this stuffed pasta dish for your next family get-together?

You can also make it ahead and enjoy it for a weeknight meal if unexpected guests pop by.

Make sure you check out the produce aisle for precut and peeled squash to speed up this recipe.

And if there is no time to make this rose sauce, simply add 35% whipping cream to some pasta sauce and you will have an instant rose you will love.

Swirls of pasta surround this pale orange filling that has added crunch from the hazelnuts.

No fresh pasta? Simply use about 24 dried lasagna sheets, cooked, and bake.

1. In a saucepan of boiling water, cook squash about 20 minutes or until tender. Drain and place in large bowl. Using potato masher, mash squash until smooth. Stir in ricotta, hazelnuts, parsley, cheese, garlic, pepper and salt.

2. Meanwhile, in a pot of boiling salted water, cook pasta for 2 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water. Lay in single layer on clean tea towel and pat dry. Spread squash mixture evenly over pasta sheets, leaving 1/2 inch (1 cm) on one short end. Starting on opposite end, roll up jelly-roll style. Slice each roll into 8 pieces; set aside.

3. Rose Sauce: In saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add flour and cook, stirring for 1 minute. Whisk in milk and cook, stirring about 10 minutes or until thick enough to coat back of spoon. Add pasta sauce, salt, pepper and nutmeg.

4. Pour half of the sauce into a 13x9-inch (3 L) greased baking dish to cover bottom. Place pasta pieces in pan, overlapping slightly. Pour over remaining sauce to cover. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake in 375 F (190 C) oven about 25 minutes or until golden and bubbly.

Make ahead

If you want to make this recipe ahead of time, here are some tips.

- **Step 2.** After rolling up, wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for up to 1 day.
- **Step 4.** Cook an additional 10 minutes if using make-ahead. Once cooked, let cool 30 minutes. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days.

Ingredients

- 6 cups (1.5 L) peeled and cubed butternut squash (about 2 lb/1 kg)
- 1 cup (250 ml) ricotta cheese
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) toasted chopped hazelnuts
- 1/3 cup (75 ml) chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 small clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml) pepper
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) salt
- 4 sheets fresh pasta

Rose Sauce

- 3 tbsp (45 ml) butter
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) all-purpose flour
- 3 cups (750 ml) milk
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) pasta sauce
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml) each salt and pepper
- Pinch fresh grated nutmeg
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) grated Parmesan cheese

This recipe makes eight servings. EMILY RICHARDS

Comforting Italian ideal for winter

This recipe for Lobster Manicotti Fra Diavolo serves five. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1. In a medium saucepan over medium-high, heat the oil. Add the onion and cook until tender and beginning to brown, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer half of the onions to a medium bowl. Add the red pepper flakes and garlic to the saucepan and continue to cook for 3 to 4 minutes. Add the tomatoes and cover. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 15 to 20 minutes. Stir in the lemon juice, then season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

2. Add the lobster, ricotta and basil to the bowl of onion. Stir to combine, then season with salt and pepper.

3. Heat the oven to 400 F. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Spread 1/2 cup of the sauce over the bottom of a 9-by-9-inch baking dish.

4. Cook the pasta in the boiling water according to package directions, then drain well. Working quickly and carefully with one sheet of pasta at a time, lay a pasta sheet flat in front of you. Spoon 1/4 cup of the lobster-ricotta filling across the bottom edge of the pasta sheet. Roll the pasta away from you, forming a tube around the filling. Lay the rolled and filled pasta (manicotti) on the sauce in the baking dish.

5. Repeat with the remaining pasta sheets, filling and lining the manicotti in a row in the prepared pan. Spoon the remaining sauce over the tops of the manicotti. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the sauce is bubbling and browning around the edges. Serve topped with basil and grated Romano, if desired.

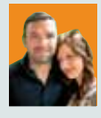
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 medium yellow onions, chopped
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 28-oz can crushed fire-roasted tomatoes
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 7 oz cooked lobster meat, drained, patted dry and roughly chopped (about 1 mounded cup)
- 1 cup whole-milk ricotta cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil, plus extra for garnish
- 8-oz box wide lasagna noodle sheets (10 sheets)
- Grated Romano cheese (optional)

Food around the world

India (vegan rating: 9/10)



MEAT AND VEG
meatandvegontheroad.tumblr.com
Photos: Suzi Staheli
Words: Eoin Weldon

Meat, a contented carnivorous writer, documents his and his vegan fiancée Veg's dietary journey as they travel and munch their way across four continents.

Veg: Both of our pallets were spoiled in this much-anticipated country. India is home to an estimated and staggering 500 million vegetarians, so Veg was never short of options. In one of many vegan-friendly restaurants in Hampi she had a ghee-free, cashew-vegetable curry served on a large leaf and accompanied by vegan naan instead of rice.

Meat: Goa is the go-to coastal tourist destination here, and the seafood was of a very high standard. Huge juicy shrimp starred in my favourite hot vindaloos, but on this occasion I went for a local Goan fish curry. A modest bowl of basmati rice came alongside a silver bowl of beautifully spiced curry that enveloped a soft flaky white fish. India truly tasted divine.

NHL

Maple Leafs show Carlyle the door

Inconsistency ended Randy Carlyle's tenure as coach of the Toronto Maple Leafs, according to general manager Dave Nonis.

Carlyle was fired Tuesday after the Maple Leafs lost five of seven games on their last road trip. The Leafs have a 21-16-3 record this season and currently hold one of the two wildcard spots in the Eastern Conference.

"We just felt at this point this was the right time to make the change and move ahead and try to get this team back playing like we have played for periods this season," Nonis said at a news conference.

Assistants Peter Horachek and Steve Spott will handle coaching duties for Wednesday night's home game against the Washington Capitals.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Baseball Hall of Fame

4 players elected in 1 year for first time since 1955

Randy Johnson, Pedro Martinez and John Smoltz, a trio of star pitchers who dominated in an era of offence, were elected to baseball's Hall of Fame on Tuesday along with Craig Biggio, the first time since 1955 that writers selected four players in one year.

The Big Unit, Martinez and Smoltz easily earned induction on their first tries, and Biggio made it on the third attempt after falling two votes shy last year.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

UFC

Jones checks into drug rehab

UFC light-heavyweight champion Jon Jones has entered drug treatment, the mixed martial arts promotion says.

The UFC announced Tuesday that Jones failed a random drug test last month.

The Nevada Athletic Commission says Jones tested positive for the main metabolite of cocaine, according to Yahoo Sports. Benzoylecgonine is not banned by the commission for out-of-competition use, so Jones wasn't suspended.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Luongo comes clean on Vancouver exit

Canucks. Getting benched for Heritage Classic accelerated his trade to Florida

CAM TUCKER
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Roberto Luongo looks on from the bench during the Heritage Classic between the Canucks and Senators on March 2 at BC Place Stadium. The Canucks traded the goalie to the Panthers two days later. RICH LAM/GETTY IMAGES

Roberto Luongo was relaxed. He spoke about maturing throughout his many years in the National Hockey League and about trying to enjoy his return to Vancouver and Rogers Arena.

It was on that ice where he and the Canucks came one win short of the franchise's first Stanley Cup four years ago.

Four short years later, things have changed. In a tumultuous 2013-14 season, the 35-year-old Luongo was dealt back to the Florida Panthers.

Sitting and watching the Heritage Classic last March ultimately accelerated that deal.

Luongo was parked on the bench in front of more than 50,000 fans at BC Place Stadium, and the Canucks lost.

"There's no hiding it. I did want to play that game," said Luongo at a press conference Tuesday after the Panthers skated at Rogers Arena.

"If I would've played, I'd probably maybe still be here. Who knows? I don't know."

On Thursday, when the Panthers meet the Canucks, Luongo will walk out of the visitors' dressing room, onto the visitors' bench and skate to the visitors' crease.

Once a polarizing figure in Vancouver — playoff collapses to the Chicago Blackhawks in back-to-back years didn't help — Luongo won fan support back to his side toward the end of his tenure.

He showed off his humorous side. That and his effort to regain the starting job through stronger play increased his popularity with the fan base.

Luongo, before he left Vancouver, was able to reconcile a connection with the fan base but admitted he didn't know what to expect from the fans.

"Luus and boos — they all sound the same," he quipped. "Either way I just want to enjoy the game."

Luongo's numbers have been exceptional this season.

As of Tuesday, the Panthers sat two points back of the embattled Toronto Maple Leafs for the final wildcard spot in the East.

"We always talk about when your team gets better, it starts in the net," said Panthers head coach Gerard Gallant. "He gives us a chance to win every night we're playing."

Follow Cam Tucker on Twitter @camtucker_metro

Canucks hang on to defeat Islanders

The Canucks' Nick Bonino, front left, celebrates scoring a goal against the Islanders at Rogers Arena on Tuesday night. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

One slump was busted. Then another. And another.

Vancouver Canucks defenceman Ryan Stanton had gone so long without a goal that on New Year's Eve, he took to Twitter to poke fun at himself, stating he had gone a full year without scoring a goal in organized hockey.

His last NHL goal before Tuesday's game against the New York Islanders: Oct. 17, 2013. That's quite a drought, even for someone who isn't at all expected to score.

Stanton got the Canucks on the board, and they would eventually earn a 3-2 victory over the visiting Islanders.

Stanton's wasn't the only slump to end.

Nick Bonino gave Vancouver a 2-1 lead in the second period, knocking in a rebound past Jaroslav Halak. It was Bonino's first goal in eight games and second in the last 24 games.

And Linden Vey, without a goal in the previous 12 games and a healthy scratch Saturday against Detroit, scored on a breakaway to increase Vancouver's lead to 3-1.

The Canucks have now won five of their last seven games. CAM TUCKER/METRO

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2015 Volvo S60 T6 Drive E

- **Type.** Four-door, front-wheel drive, compact-to-midsize luxury sedan
- **Engine.** 2.0-litre turbocharged I4 (302 hp)
- **Transmissions.** Eight-speed automatic
- **Price.** $44,295 base, $53,145 as tested

Market position

Sedan variant of Volvo's entry-level family of sedans (S60), wagons (V60) and crossovers (XC60). Market appeal is designed around safety and a clean interior design.
The T5 has a new 2.0-L turbo four-cylinder engine, good for 240 hp. The T6 combines turbocharging and supercharging — good for 302 hp.

Points

- A mid-cycle revision for 2014 included new body panels from the A pillars forward and a revamped interior.
- A new line of Drive E four-cylinder engines all come with a start/stop feature for improved fuel economy, and an Eco+ mode that adjusts the engine and cuts off accessories as soon as possible.
- A new 8-speed automatic transmission.

The S60 boasts as much safety tech as anything in its class.

Safety features

An IIHS Top Safety Pick, it received NHTSA's five-star rating for crash performance and is one of few vehicles in this segment to pass IIHS's tough small overlap frontal crash test. Safety systems include pedestrian and cyclist detection with automatic braking and city safety (warning and braking when approaching a vehicle too quickly).

Still Swedish but more efficient

PHOTOS: MIKE GOETZ

Review. Although now owned by China's Geely, Volvo's new S60 was designed and engineered in Sweden

MIKE GOETZ
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Volvo has long provided a strong Swedish alternative in a luxury market dominated by German brands.

So Volvo fans have been holding their breath ever since Chinese automaker Geely purchased the brand from Ford in 2010. Would Volvo continue to be Swedish-centric?

Well, so far, so good. Most aspects of Volvo's engineering and design continue to originate from Sweden, and Geely has demonstrated it is willing and able to invest in future Volvo products.

The transformed S60 is one of the first Volvos to feature the new Drive E line of fuel-efficient yet powerful, direct-injection four-cylinder engines, all with an automatic start/stop function. With various levels of turbo and supercharging, and a future hybrid-electric option, these engines will eventually power all Volvos.

The S60 line starts at the T5 ($39,595), with a 2.0-litre turbo Drive E engine with 240 hp. Our tester was an upscale T6, which packs a 2.0-litre engine with both turbocharging and supercharging to produce 302 hp. The theory is to use supercharging for power at low revs and turbocharging at high revs, and it works just as advertised. I couldn't detect any handover issues, just lots of grunt all the time.

The restrained but gorgeous interior is both functional and elegant.

Although the engine is lusty, it remains civilized and quiet — unless you really push the pedal to unleash its mean side. It is a charismatic motor, which is a good thing, because the S60's handling is less so.

The S60 remains a nice, smooth ride, although its front-wheel-drive architecture is not really in the same league as the rear-wheel designs from Germany.

The interior, however, is gorgeous. Rendered with characteristic Scandinavian restraint, it is both functional and elegant. If you think some luxury cars have too much visual interior stimulus, this might suit your style.

My T6 had sport seats, which were very therapeutic and supportive. Even though the rear-seat area is smaller than some competitors, the seats themselves are a cut above.

The S60 is packed with as much safety technology as anything in its class — lane-keeping assist, torque vectoring for safer cornering, blind-spot detection, pedestrian and cyclist detection with full automatic braking, and driver alert control.

Always smooth, powerful, safe, and distinctly Volvo, the new S60 adds vastly improved fuel economy to its list of attractions.

What's not to like?

Compare

1 Acura TLX Tech V6
Base price: $43,864
All new for 2015 with a 290-hp V6 engine and front-wheel drive with all-wheel steer.

2 BMW 335i
Base price: $53,295
Boasts a 300-hp inline 6, with lots of visual horsepower, too.

3 Cadillac ATS 2.0L turbo
Base price: $39,373
A sporty rear-wheel drive with 272 hp. But the back seat and trunk are a bit tight.

DRIVE

Tech. Volvo will connect drivers to nearby cyclists

Volvo is demonstrating its latest safety concept, a smart cycling helmet that connects with cars, at this week's International CES in January.

The concept was developed in collaboration with sports gear manufacturer POC and Ericsson to reduce collisions. If a cyclist is in a driver's blind spot, both receive a warning.

The driver will be alerted via the car's heads-up display, while a warning light in the helmet will alert the cyclist, enabling both to take the necessary action to avoid a collision.

The smart helmet communication system is controlled by a smartphone app and the processing is done via the cloud, so that alerts and information can be sent to all drivers of connected cars in the immediate area.

Volvo cars already have an array of collision and accident mitigation technologies that can track other road users' movements and even automatically apply the brakes when a collision course is identified. However, there are very few smart systems available to detect road users like cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians.

A global growth in cycling has resulted in an increase in serious cycling accidents.

Volvo's City Safety system — standard on the new XC90 — is a technology that can detect, warn and auto-brake to avoid collisions with cyclists.

"By exploring cloud-based safety systems, we are getting ever closer to eliminating the remaining blind spots between cars and cyclists and, by that, avoid collisions," said Volvo vice-president Klas Bendrik. **AFP**

A warning appears on the windshield when a cyclist is in your blind spot. AFP

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Safety. Cycling vigilantes use helmet cams to record reckless drivers

"Foul!" yells Lewis Dediare from his bicycle, brandishing a red card in the face of a dumbfounded delivery driver.

The scene is not a soccer pitch, but rather the middle of a London street, where Dediare, alias the Traffic Droid, is busy enforcing the law.

The 49-year-old is one of dozens of British cyclists who have found a new raison d'etre: to travel the land recording reckless drivers with helmet-mounted cameras and passing the evidence on to police. Authorities were at first wary of the vigilantes, but every case is now treated on its own merits.

Equipped with Klaxon horns and a selfie cam comprising lights and eight cameras, Dediare is a one-man sound and light show, as likely to amuse as to intimidate.

"Some people say I look like a flying saucer," he joked.

In addition to his red card, Dediare carries a tape measure to make sure motorists keep the regulated one-metre distance from cyclists.

The spur for action was a 2009 bicycle accident in which he nearly died. Every day since getting back on his bike, he has documented his two-hour ride to his job in telecommunications, filming "idiots" before exposing them on YouTube.

Whether it is cutting people off, jumping red lights or using mobile phones, there is nothing that escapes his gaze. "I'm scanning the road all the time, it's like a video game," he said.

He reports about four drivers per day. Some will be fined and even lose their licence.

His efforts inevitably irritate some road users.

"How about cyclists, then? They are far worse. They don't look at the traffic lights," asked a disgruntled truck driver, casting a wary eye at Dediare. **AFP**

Lewis Dediare uses eight cameras to record driving infractions. AFP

Delivering the final step to battle gridlock

Driving Force.
Businesses must find better ways to transport goods from warehouses to stores and homes

JIL MCINTOSH
drive@metronews.ca

When experts talk about sustainable transportation and solving traffic woes, most of them concentrate on personal cars and public transit. But there's another piece of the puzzle that needs to be addressed: last-mile logistics.

That's the name given to the final delivery of goods as they're shipped from warehouses to stores, restaurants, businesses or private homes. About 20 per cent of all city traffic is related to last-mile delivery, so optimizing it could reduce the number of trucks on our streets and the corresponding traffic congestion, as well as cut down significantly on emissions and air pollution.

France's postal service uses electric vans and bicycles to deliver smaller quantities of mail. JIL MCINTOSH

"The right vehicles need to be used for each type of (cargo) movement, so customers can select the most convenient commercial vehicles in each situation," says Yoshihide Maeda, senior managing director for truck manufacturer Hino Motors. "When you're talking about the future, you cannot avoid the issues of energy and the environment."

Currently, the general business model is to store items in warehouses until a customer orders them, and then load them onto a truck for delivery. Although the first miles of delivery, from the factory to the warehouse, are fairly efficient (with ships, trains and tractor-trailers usually filled completely on each trip), last-mile deliveries are often made using large or medium-sized trucks loaded to only a fraction of their capacity.

One solution, Maeda says, is for fleets to include a variety of vehicles and use the appropriate one for each task. "Conventionally, diesel has been used for everything, but there may be better choices for other distances," he says. "Electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids are convenient for high-frequency, small-item delivery in cities. Then you would use hybrid vehicles or (hydrogen) fuel cells for medium distances, and diesel will continue for long distance."

Although vehicles play a major role in the issue, experts agree that infrastructure needs to change as well. Last-mile deliveries can bottleneck when retailers don't have sufficient loading docks or storage space, so wholesalers have to keep sending partially loaded trucks.

Other potential solutions include manufacturers pooling their warehousing and deliveries to retailers; setting up "package stations" where retailers or consumers can pick up their products; designing stores to be better equipped for efficient last-mile delivery; and trucks with modular loading for improved capacity.

Optimized options

- France's postal system uses a variety of vehicles for last-mile delivery, including small electric cargo vans for parcels and mailbags, and electric-assist bicycles for letter carriers.
- Drones will play a role with inner-city deliveries, as well as carrying food and medicine to remote areas or people trapped in disaster zones.
- Compact cargo vans have already helped optimize small-item deliveries for many Canadian companies.

Of course, there will be challenges, and planners will have to solve such issues as the costs of retrofitting existing fleets and stores, as well as convincing competitors to work together on shared resources.

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Shift: From hybrids, technology, new vehicles and the environment, to saving money at the pumps

VW adds hydrogen fuel cell to Golf's list of drive options

With the introduction of its hydrogen-fuel-cell Sportwagen HyMotion Concept, Volkswagen's Golf becomes the first car to entertain all drive types that are currently available. The front-wheel-drive HyMotion Concept accelerates to 100 km/h in 10 seconds. With hydrogen stored in four high-tech carbon-fibre tanks (located in a space-saving way in the underbody), the car has a driving range of 515 kilometres. Refuelling takes just three minutes. An onboard lithium-ion battery stores the kinetic energy recovered from regenerative braking, assists in the starting phase of the fuel cell and adds a dynamic boost to the car's maximum acceleration. All that's needed now is a hydrogen-fuel infrastructure to support it.

ALL STORIES AND PHOTOS FROM WHEELBASEMEDIA.COM

The technology used in the hydrogen-powered HyMotion Concept from Volkswagen appears much the same as in the upcoming Toyota Mirai.

Blu-ray discs could have solar-cell uses

Blu-ray discs outperform DVDs as storage media, in light of their high capacity, high definition and higher transfer rates, notes the emerging technology magazine Gizmag. They also have the ability to greatly improve the efficiency of solar cells, when their etched information patterns are repurposed for use as light concentrators. A research team at Northwestern University in Illinois has discovered that the scattering effect on light shone through the arrangement of data etched on a Blu-ray disc improves energy absorption across the spectrum of light used by solar cells — by as much as 22 per cent. Applications of Blu-ray solar cells could one day range from automotive to domestic and even industrial uses.

While research to improve solar cells is a given, there's also research to maximize the light going to them. Enter the Blue-ray disc.

Shift points

- Chinese media reports that electric-car sales in that country overtook those of the United States in September. Buyers in China bought 11,991 cars with plugs, against 10,551 sold in the U.S., according to an article on the web news site Sina Auto.
- Tesla has opened new Supercharger locations in London and Birmingham, England, as part of a network expansion that will allow Model S owners to drive anywhere in the country and charge for free, for life.
- Plug-in hybrids are merely a "bridging technology" to the universal adoption of pure battery-electric vehicles, says the head of powertrain development at Volkswagen. Heinz-Jakob Neusser said the ultimate goal is entirely battery-electric vehicles that take advantage of a ubiquitous network of fast-charge stations.

Audi's new diesel-electric hybrid merges the benefits of both power sources. The V6 should greatly improve highway fuel economy.

Diesel and hybrid-electric combination will power Audi's larger models

Audi's flagship sedan, the A8, will soon be available with a new e-tron hybrid drivetrain, using a 3.0-litre V6 diesel engine.

The new model follows the smaller A3 e-tron Sportback, which uses a 1.4-litre engine paired to an electric motor, according to the Auto Express website. The new setup will be used to power Audi's larger models and will be rolled out across the large-vehicle lineup after the A8.

Audi said the new system would have 368 horsepower and an all-electric range of 50 kilometres, which would handle the bulk of daily city driving.

Audi board member for technical development, Ulrich Hackenberg, said the new system will go into production early in 2015.

Vehicle-to-grid technology shows promise

Researchers are studying how the idea of large numbers of electric cars storing energy and feeding it back into electric grids would work in the real world. Vehicle-to-grid technology is seen by some as a way to smooth demand for grid electricity by using electric cars as mobile energy reserves, while possibly offering owners small payments from utilities for the service. A fleet of test cars at the University of Delaware now sells power back to the grid, reports the Wall Street Journal, and stores excess energy for utilities when it isn't needed to meet demand. The pilot program is being conducted with utility company NRG Energy, which also operates a network of electric-car charging stations.

Citysurfer explores flexible mobility

With a top speed of 24 km/h and an electric range of up to 24 kilometres, Mini's Citysurfer concept addresses concerns about traffic congestion affecting personal mobility. The 18-kilogram electric kick-scooter folds neatly into the luggage compartment of a Mini, and unfolds in seconds, ready to take its user from a car park on the outskirts of town to their final destination in the city centre. The scooter can be recharged from a standard electric wall outlet and, using a special cable, when stored in the car. Flexible mobility concepts will play a key role in confronting such developments as increasing urbanization, climate change and resource scarcity, said Mini's parent company BMW. If you had an electric scooter in your car, you could park farther away from work and just scoot in.

The Citysurfer electric scooter folds up into a tight package that fits into the back of a Mini Cooper.

AUGMENTED REALITY

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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Control your feelings today, especially if someone you thought you could trust lets you down. Don't get upset about something you can't change.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
A colleague you thought you could rely on will say something that makes you realize they are not on your side after all. End the association if you think that's the right thing to do.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Your current big idea may be wonderful but don't shout about it too loudly. In fact you should keep it to yourself at least until the end of the week.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You may feel confident but the planets warn you should think before taking on authority. If you feel the need to prove yourself wait until Mars changes signs on the 12th.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Form a picture in your mind of where you'd like to be a year from now and then start doing the things that will make it happen. All things are possible but you need to plan ahead.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Something you have spent months trying to get right will solve itself over the next 24 hours. Accept the situation and get on with your life.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Someone you don't get along with will be friendly towards you today and you're right to be suspicious. According to the planets, they're up to no good.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You are full of energy but don't expect other people to be as active as you. Just because you are racing around does not mean everyone has to follow.

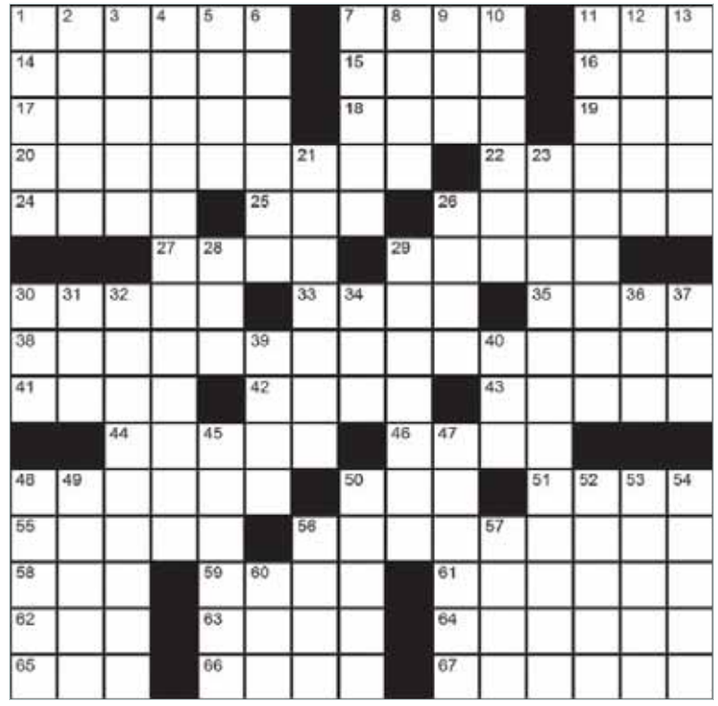
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Be careful what you say over the next 24 hours because if you say too much you could hurt a friend's feelings and chances are they won't be a friend for much longer.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may worry that you have fallen behind in your schedule but the planets indicate there is plenty of time to catch up. In your personal life and at work make this a day of planning.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You might be tempted to argue with someone whose opinions you find offensive but they are likely deliberately trying to provoke you into overreacting.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Have faith in your own abilities, even if people have made it clear they think you are taking on too much. Success depends on may things but most of all it depends on confidence.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across
1. Sea between Australia and New Zealand
7. Bobby Orr's number
11. Rapper, Mos __
14. Eminent: 2 wds.
15. Provo's place
16. Galilee's locale [abbr.]
17. Cute-style farm animal
18. World's longest river
19. '60s lettered car
20. Paperback place-savers
22. Ms. Neuwirth's
24. Aleutian island
25. Lana Del __
26. "Wait...": 2 wds.
27. __ Only (Canadian Hip-Hop artist)
29. Commuter's currency
30. "Real Time with Bill __"
33. Doubleton
35. Count on
38. National Ballet of Canada star: 2 wds.
41. Dix - trois = __
42. Line above the equator, _. __.
43. Grabs
44. __ Sound, Ontario
46. "American __"
48. French silent film actress, Renee __ (b.1898 - d.1933)
50. Slash's old li'l band
51. George Lucas character
55. Flower's sepals, collectively
56. Downward-Facing Dog, and others: 2 wds.
58. Very: Spanish
59. Wing-like
61. One stopping the TV show
62. Tolkien creature
63. Lengthy
64. Whole
65. Fr. holy woman
66. Actor Mr. Wilson
67. Pay close regard to again

Down
1. Alberto __ (Olympics skiing champ from Italy)
2. Underway
3. Nose-in-the-air type
4. Michael Dowse's Canuck flick "Fubar" (2002), for example
5. Mr. Egoyan
6. New Jersey airport city
7. Wilson Pickett's "__ Broadway"
8. Actress Carre
9. 'Concept' completer
10. Antelope of South Africa
11. Nova Scotia... Narrow peninsula on the Fundy Coast: 2 wds.
12. Cosmetics company, __ Lauder
13. New England poet Robert
21. Fix up makeup
23. Official name of Winnipeg's famed Golden Boy statue: 2 wds.
26. North: French
28. Grampus
29. NFLD: Historical community on Fogo Island
30. Gov. gigs
31. "__ We There Yet?" (2005)
32. Boucherville-born politician, Sir Louis-__ Lafontaine (b.1807 - d.1864)
34. Small battery
36. Novelist Harper
37. 2015, et al.
39. Curtly concerning: 2 wds.
40. _ __ Z
45. Edmonton Oilers home, __ Place
47. Don __ (Jon Hamm's "Mad Men" role)
48. Tops
49. Intimidate
50. Valley variety
52. Actor Mr. Davis
53. John __ (Farm equipment company)
54. Comparable to blood's colour: 2 wds.
56. Quickly tug
57. Window piece
60. Mr. Ferrigno

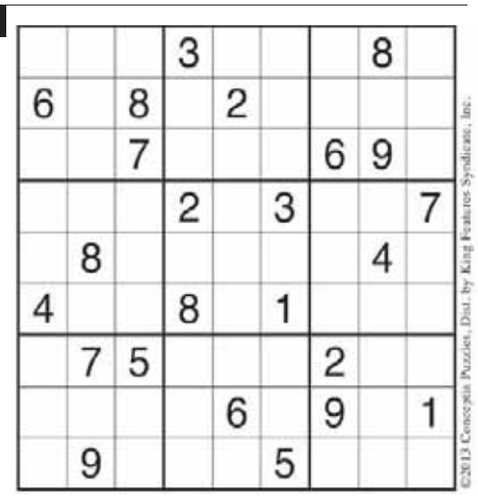
Yesterday's Crossword

Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku

8	4	1	5	6	3	7	2	9
7	2	6	1	9	4	8	3	5
5	3	9	8	2	7	1	4	6
1	9	4	2	3	5	6	8	7
2	8	3	7	1	6	9	5	4
6	5	7	4	8	9	3	1	2
9	6	5	3	4	1	2	7	8
3	7	2	6	5	8	4	9	1
4	1	8	9	7	2	5	6	3

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